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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2532  
INFO RUEHBE/AMEMBASSY BELMOPAN IMMEDIATE 0004  
RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE 0754  
RUEHMU/AMEMBASSY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE 0622  
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE 3747  
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE  
RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE 1939  
RUEHSN/AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE 1492  
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO IMMEDIATE 0416  
RUEHTG/AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA IMMEDIATE 0413  
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS PANAMA 000759

SIPDIS

COMMERCE FOR ITA: GERI WARD  
DHS FOR OFFICE OF POLICY: STEWART BAKER  
USAID FOR LAC: EBONY BOSTIC  
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E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ECIN](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [OSCI](#) [PM](#) [PREL](#) [TBIO](#) [TSPL](#)  
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE DELIVERED: FINALIZING THE NON-BINDING  
MULTILATERAL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON MUTUAL  
ASSISTANCE ON FOOD AND PRODUCT SAFETY.

REF: SECSTATE 97072

¶1. In the absence of relevant GOP officials in Washington to attend high-level meetings, Econ Counselor sent an official letter with the draft MOU to Minister of Health Rosario Turner and copied Minister of Agricultural Development Guillermo Salazar and Minister of Foreign Relations Samuel Lewis Navarro.

¶2. In addition, Econoff called Itza Broce, head of the Ministry of Health's Department of International Affairs and Technical Cooperation, to inform her of the official letter and attached MOU. Itza Broce noted that Minister Turner was out of the country. She will inform the Minister of the letter and USG intention to sign the MOU during Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) meeting. Broce mentioned the Minister was not planning to attend the PAHO meeting but would send Vice-Minister Dr. Dora Jara. Econoff also called the office of the Director General of Foreign Affairs Javier Bonagas to inform him of the letter and USG intention.

¶3. In all communications Econoffs urged GOP officials to urgently attend to the draft MOU to enable signing at PAHO meeting September 29 - Oct 3. Achieving GOP approval by September 29 may be a difficult task. We anticipate that the GOP will be required to perform legal and technical reviews of the text and conduct interministerial consultations before approval can be secured.

¶4. Will report further developments.

STEPHENSON